



INDEXA

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Special Issue

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Banaba 2013—T33A

By Jay Slough, K4ZLE

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It was more than a DXpedition. It was an adventure. It was a challenge. It was a learning experience and, probably equally important, it was a mission of mercy. On November 3rd of 2013 nineteen hardy hams met in Tarawa, Republic of Kiribati to begin a journey they would long remember. We were accompanied by our concierge, Anne Corbett, a Kiribati native with Banaba relations. Without her assistance the activation of T33A probably would not have occurred. Most of the team was comprised of seasoned DXpeditioners and/or testers. There were a few



The T33A team: Front Row--Gerd, DJ5IW; Dom, DL5EBE; Mike, N9NS. Second Row--Cliff, KD6XH; Jay, AA4FL; Arnie, N6HC; Bob, WA1F; Ann, WA1S; Axel, DK6KVA; David, N6HD; Charlie, W8KK; Al, K3VN. Back Row--John, N7CQQ; Jay, W2IJ; Dave, N1EMC; Ron, WA6FGV; Ricardo, PY2PT; Alan, AD6E; Jay, K4ZLE.

'nuggets'¹ on the team but they quickly learned about operating from the 'neck of the funnel'!

There have only been little more than a handful of operations from Banaba since the late Jim Smith, VK9JS, activated it 25 years ago as T33JS². Most of those expeditions were much smaller in scope than was T33A and in total netted little over 200,000 QSOs. As a result T33 stood number 33 on The DX Magazine's Most Wanted list. Our challenge was to put a sizable dent in the demand for this DXCC entity.

1 In US Naval Aviator parlance—a rookie aviator, especially one on his first cruise. As a rookie he is still unproven and unrefined but, like a gold nugget, the potential exists to be very valuable!

2 T33R/T33T in 1990 ; T33KK/T33CS in 1994 ;T33CW, T33Y, T33RD in 1999; and T33C with various personal calls in 2004.

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Banaba 2013—T33A (con'd)

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Banaba was formally known as Ocean Island and the real Old Timers might have contacted Bob Lusk, VR1L, John Walker, VR1G or Bill Hempel, VR1N, back when the island was being mined by the British Phosphate Commission (BPC), prior to 1979. Today only about 15% of the original phosphate remains and the island is practically a wasteland of coral pinnacles. Banaba is a special entity unto itself. While it is part of the island nation of Kiribati, it is a unique geopolitical entity and stands apart from the rest of the country since it is administered from Rabi Island, which is part of Fiji. The fact that the Rabi Council is involved in Banaba's administration occurred because both Fiji and the then Gilbert & Ellice Islands were under British rule when the decision was made to displace the 2000 native Banabans after WW II. This forced resettlement was done in order to eliminate local resistance while the BPC scRAPED (sic) the island of phosphate. Today approximately 300 native Banabans have returned to live on their home island.

Kiribati consists of 32 flat coral atolls and one raised coral island (Banaba). The International Date Line is bent to the east to place all of this island nation in the same day but spanning 4 time zones. This gerrymandering of the International Date Line causes an anomaly in our world clocks. By definition a day is 24 hours in length, right? The Line Island Time Zone is actually 14 hours ahead of UTC which gives us days that are 26 hours from the eastern most time zone to the western most time zone. Banaba itself has its own time zone that places local time 30 minutes behind the Gilbert Island Time Zone (Tarawa). Kiribati straddles the equator and encompasses an area of 1,351,000 square miles. However, with all that area the nation's population is only about 100,000. Banaba lies about one degree south of the equator and is only about 3.6 square miles in area. Its highest point, which is the highest point in Kiribati, is only 266 feet ASL. Kiribati has been proclaimed to be in danger of 'sinking' into the Pacific Ocean because of rising sea levels. Excluding Banaba, the highest natural land formation in the nation is reported to be 16 feet ASL.

On November 5, 2013, after approximately 40 hours on the catamaran M/V Tekinati, an inter-island ferry with no bunking or kitchen facilities, we arrived on Banaba Island. Our 8 tons of radio

equipment, humanitarian supplies, food, water (almost 3 tons) and cooking and refrigeration appliances were off-loaded from the M/V Tekinati and we began to get situated on the island.

Although we had cleared everything with the governing council from Fiji and the Kiribati Member of Parliament, we had to first meet with local officials to discuss the housing situation and to obtain permission to use the entire soccer field for one of our sites. After the meeting, we proceeded to have the



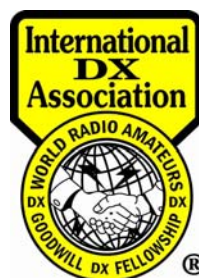
Banaba House, our home away from home.

local 'teamsters' move everything from the dock to the prospective sites. We stayed in the island guest house, Banaba House, where most previous DXpeditions had operated. In its heyday this was proba-

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Banaba 2013—T33A (con'd)

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bly a first class facility, but today it is little more than a termite ridden, near empty shell of a house. One of our team member's leg went completely through the second story floor and through the ceiling of the room below. Others had their feet or the feet of their cots puncture the rotted floor. Of course there was no electrical service except from our generators. The plumbing was nasty even by the standards of experienced 'mountain-men'! Plumbing existed, but water for flushing and bathing had to be hand carried and dumped. It was so hot and humid that before one could dry off after a shower they were already covered in perspiration.

Initially the CW site was on the soccer field, about half a mile up the hill from Banaba House. The SSB/RTTY site was originally set up at Banaba House. By 2311Z on November 5, 2013 our first contact was made to test the first complete station and we were off and running shortly thereafter. In the next 36 hours we managed to get all 6 stations



The youth of Banaba allowed us to use one of the few level areas of the island.

at the two sites set up and working. In reality we had everything working except 160 and 75/80m within 24 hours of arrival. It was mentioned earlier that this was an adventure, a challenge and a learning experience. The antennas were part of the challenge and learning. Although all the antennas had been used on previous expeditions and tested prior to this trip, we had to do some 'MacGyvering' to get them all working. For instance we had to readjust the capacitive top hats for 160 and 80 m verticals to

achieve resonance or near resonance. On the 80 m vertical we could not alter the top hat enough to make it play right. After unsuccessfully trying to wind a base coil for impedance matching, we resorted to taking one of the 40 m $\frac{1}{4}$ wave shorted traps and use it as a matching stub. Sometimes it pays to know a little about transmission line theory!



Mike (N9NS), Alan (AD6E), Dom (DL5EBE), and Gerd (DJ5IW) swelter in the "shack" at the soccer field. Few at home ever endure such heat.

Propagation was really good for about three of the days. Most of the remaining time we experienced marginal conditions with a solar flare, the usual Pacific static crashes and equatorial mid-day doldrums. At times echoing and phasing occurring from multi-path propagation made copying a transmission a bit of a challenge, even on CW. The 6 stations were kept on the air following propagation as we experienced it. Complete statistics are available on Club Log. As an aside, we appreciate Club Log making their service available to us and other DXpeditions. Having that service certainly adds a positive dimension to our hobby, don't you agree? If you do agree, you might show it by making a donation to them.

While we did not meet our goal of 100K contacts, we did make 83,347 QSOs with 22,635 unique call signs. As expected most contacts were with North American and Central American stations followed by Asia (mostly JA's). We did not give those areas priority. Their relative physical location and sheer

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Banaba 2013—T33A (con'd)



Exhaustion from the rigors of maintaining an operating schedule are commonplace on major DXpeditions. Here, Jay (AA4FL) succumbs to it.

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numbers made it impossible for it to be otherwise. We sought other areas of the world, especially Europe, and did our best to make T33 available to all who called. About halfway through the DXpedition we decided to swap sites by mode, since we were running almost 2:1 CW QSOs to SSB/RTTY. At that time we shifted the SSB operation up the hill to the soccer field and moved the CW operation down to Banaba House. If you look at the numbers, we still had many more CW Qs than SSB/RTTY Qs. We were also disappointed in the 160 m numbers,



Besides operating the radio, Jay (AA4FL) pulled "double duty" administering dental care to the local people. No wonder he was tired in the photo at the top of this page.

but it was not because we were not there calling. After more than 12 days we went QRT on Nov 17, 2013 at 0557Z.

It was also mentioned that this expedition was a mission of mercy. Jay, AA4FL, is a dentist. Can you guess by his call what state he is from? In addition to pulling his share of time on the air, he set up a clinic in the local dispensary. He saw over 60 patients and pulled 165 teeth. That represents just over 20% of the island population! There are no dentists on Banaba and medical care is limited to the equivalent of a RN who does her best to treat the local populace.

We also presented the children with 100 pairs of Croc shoes and a dozen new soccer balls with accessories. We had the soccer field tied up while there but you can bet it was being used anew after our departure! Additionally several non-ham local HF stations were repaired by some of our techies. Do we dare disclose that at least one was a CB radio?



There are some moments where relaxation is allowed. Here, Ann (WA1S), Dave (N1EMC), Jay (AA4FL), Anne Corbett (our "concierge") and David (N6HD-back to camera) partake in a local brew—kava.

After a 48 hour return boat ride to Tarawa the adventure was not over. The next day we found out that our return flight from Tarawa to Fiji was can-

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celebrated. As a result, most of us were delayed at least two days in returning home. Yes, it was more than a DXpedition. It was indeed an adventure, a challenge, a learning experience and a mission of mercy. Truly we will remember it for a long time.

It is our desire and hope that you enjoyed being on your side of the pileup as much as we did being on our side. However, trips like this do not just happen. DXpeditioners spend time away from their families. Not all are retired; many of them spend time away from work, burning precious vacation time, so you can put another ATNO (all time new one-Ed.) or band/mode Q in your log. Very seldom do contributions pay the full cost of these trips and whether you agree or not, these are not 'vacation' excursions taken by a few at the expense of many. Every member of this type trip digs deep into their own personal funds to make these trips a reality. There is a lot of work that goes into planning what to take, obtaining equipment, testing, loading and shipping tons of material to and fro. While deployed expedition members are usually on rotating shifts, getting little sleep, eating odd food at odd hours, sometimes contending with an unruly multitude. If it is a top 50 entity, you can bet, odds are, the environmental conditions are not idyllic either. Even after the Q's are in the log, the work is not over. Someone has to handle the QSL chores. We are not looking for sympathy. We are just pointing out reality. Non-fly-in DXpeditions are hard work!

In addition to Anne Corbett, previously mentioned, we'd like to thank Kiribati Member of Parliament Timon Aneri, Dr. Otem from their Ministry of Health and Ms. Kabo at the CCK for their assistance in getting all the permits and paperwork generated and approved.

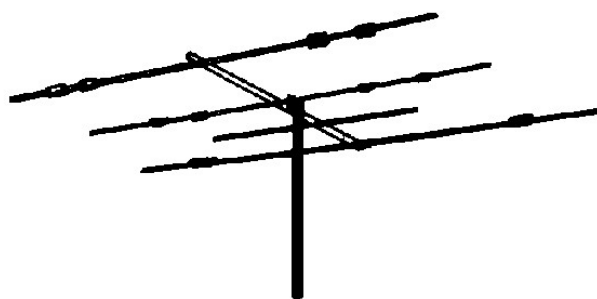
We'd also like to thank the sponsors whose logos appear on the QSL card and/or on our website. Of course INDEXA is one of those sponsoring organizations. Your willingness to spot us the cash prior to when we actually began "radiating rf", was instrumental in making T33A a reality. Unless one has been involved in planning a major operation of this type they can not fully comprehend what is involved—especially the expense. It takes a lot of front end money to charter a boat, purchase supplies, to arrange for early container shipment and

pay the upfront costs. More and more, trips to the top 50 entities just would not happen or would not happen as often without your type support.

Let's not forget the equipment manufacturers who also provided immense support. These are all top notch suppliers and most of us use their equipment in our home stations. On operations like ours equipment is used under less than ideal conditions and their stuff meets the challenge with gusto. Consider buying from them when you upgrade your station. Finally, to the individual amateurs whose support was provided prior to and after our return—you were also vital in making this sojourn possible and we thank you. We especially thank those who gave on the front end. However, it is not too late to contribute, either by OQRS or directly to our DXpedition treasurer, Cliff, KD6XH.

Where to next? QRX for now; standby one. Our DXpedition leaders hint, "There is always another adventure in the works!"

—73 *Jay*





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Dengue Fever, Earthquakes and other Disasters, or . . . How we brought you H40T and H44G

By Reiner Schlosser (DL7KL) and Frank Rutter (DL7UFR)*

From 09 to 24 March 2013 a group of 9 hams under the leadership of Sigi (DL7DF) operated from Honiara on Guadalcanal and from Santa Cruz (Temotu Province), using the callsigns H44G and H40T totalling more than 45,000 QSOs.

The Solomon Islands are located southeast of New Guinea, an island group in the South Pacific. They stretch from north to south-east for about 1100 km (05°S, 154°E to 11°S,



The Team that brought you H40T and H44G. L to R: SP3D0I, DL4WK, DK1BT, DL7UFN, DL7DF, DL7UFR, SP3CYY, and DK7KL. DK7LX is behind the camera!

157°E), originally settled by inhabitants of New Guinea, discovered by the Spanish navigator and explorer Alvaro de Mendaña de Neyra in 1568, who named the islands after the Jewish King Solomon. During World War II, the Solomon Islands were the place of severe fights between the U.S.A. and Japan, finally won by the allies—U.S.A., Australia, and New Zealand.

On 07 July 1978 the Solomon Islands gained independence.

Check in at airport Berlin-Tegel happened smoothly, our heavyweight luggage was checked through to Brisbane and so we left Berlin on 05 March 2013 at 18:50 that evening and arrived at Düsseldorf after one hour's flight. At 21:00 we continued with the long haul flight to Brisbane, across the Indian Ocean, India, the Philip-

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****Translation by Jan Ambrozy, SP3CYY***

... How we brought you H40T and H44G (con'd)

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piners and ultimately to Australia.

Time passed very slowly. After another—slightly shorter night (we flew against the sun)—and after 13-½ hours of flight we reached Brisbane, the city on the east coast of Australia. After the obligatory passport and customs control our luggage was “sniffed” by “drug dogs”. Next, we checked in with Solomon Airlines. Our bulky luggage with the Spiderbeams and R7 was checked in at a separate counter. The aircraft was fully booked. The pilot informed the passengers that he must change the flight route because of a cyclone and, therefore, had to take on additional kerosene, resulting in the need to lighten the baggage load. We hoped that the baggage left behind did not affect us. When approaching the Honiara International Airport there were problems. Due to the weather and low clouds, the pilot could not find the runway. After the third unsuccessful attempt the fuel was already fairly low, but the clouds opened and allowed a view of the runway and the aircraft made a safe landing. Thank goodness! On 08 March, after three days, we had reached our first DXpedition destination, Honiara, the capital of Guadalcanal. The Battle of Guadalcanal in World War II was one of the longest and fiercest in American military history. From August 1942 until February 1943, the islands were the centre of very severe fighting on land, at sea and in the air. Even today, relicts of WW II can be found in many places on the islands. The battled airfield is now the civilian airport Honiara. The old name was “Henderson Field” and was changed to “Honiara International Airport” in 2003 despite the strong protests of many American veterans. The sea between Honiara and the opposite island of “Savo” is called “Iron Bottom Sound”, because it is “littered” with countless wrecks, including the aircraft carrier USS Wasp.

Maggi H44MK, the only, but not active ham operator on the Solomon Islands was already waiting for us and greeted each of us in the Polynesian tradition with a wreath of flowers. It was very humid and wet—it was rainy season. Our luggage was loaded into a waiting van and we then left the airfield towards our reserved accommodations, the “SSEC Transit”, a modest but inexpensive guesthouse, owned by the local church on a hill right next to the Parliament building of the country. Upon arrival, we

learned that the house was fully booked! Participants of the Pacific Conference of Churches occupied all the rooms, so that there was no space available for us, although we had a bonafide reservation. We had to find another place. At last we were all booked into the “Honiara Hotel”, a hostel with a pool and several restaurants. Our luggage was stored in a free room, which had previously been used as shack by Bernhard (DL2GAC) who was QRV from here for several weeks every year. Here we started preparing our equipment, so that we could start with the set up of antennas very early in the morning of Saturday, the 9th March.

It was pouring with rain when we installed the quad loops for 30 and 40 meters. The terrain was very steep and there was great danger of slipping on the wet mud. High winds and a sudden gust broke down the bamboo mast including the Spiderbeam. Parts of the fiberglass tubes splintered and so did the bamboo pole. Fate was still against us. Everything took so much time that the installation of the 160/80 meter antenna had to be postponed to the next day. Then the 80-meter vertical was erected and the 40 meter antenna was moved to a better location. Finally we were QRV.



After battling the winds, the Spiderbeam finally was up and ready to radiate RF energy.

The first QSO was made on 09 March with JR6GIM from Yatsushiro City. Another 45,122 QSOs did follow. The pileups were huge. Many hams obviously still need H44 on various band/modes with high demand for RTTY. The two English OM's Phil (G3SWH) and Jim (G3RTE) made 16160 CW QSOs in February and obviously did not completely cover the very high demand. With an RF location on the

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mountain, our QTH was optimal. No obstacles to Europe, Japan and the U.S.A., and also a magnificent view over the city and harbour of Honiara.

It was extremely hot. We had planned to prepare our own meals, so we had to go shopping to buy our provisions, including plenty to drink to stay hydrated. Local people warned us of the dengue mosquito and advised us to avoid big crowds, such as the large fruit and vegetable markets in the city center. The insect is active only during the day. Many people are infected and some have even died. There is no way to get vaccinated against dengue fever, nor are there any medications. This was yet another unwelcome development.

With operations underway, almost all our solid state amplifiers failed, mainly because the high humidity led to short circuits and damaged components. We purchased a hairdryer in the city to dry the moisture from the PAs. After replacing a few components all the problems were fortunately resolved. We kept all the equipment switched on to the very end of the DXpedition to ensure the heated components drove off the moisture.. The weather changed for the better—slowly the sun came out again. The cyclone moved on towards New Caledonia. But, it became increasingly humid. The rising moisture made it feel like one was breathing in a steam bath, but the team was in good mood and very relaxed. Then some more bad news arrived. Solomon Airlines informed us, that the planned flight to Temotu on Tuesday was cancelled due to bad weather. The flight was now scheduled for Thursday, but no useful information could be obtained from the airline, obviously nobody knew exact details. Real chaos! Our contact on Temotu tried to shift the flight to Saturday. George (DK7LX) was already fed up, since everything was uncertain for days and he was totally frustrated with the situation. He decided to return back home, which we had to accept with great regret.

Meanwhile, Les (SP3DOI) and Jan (SP3CYY) operated every night on 160 and 80 meters, while DL7UFR worked only RTTY, mostly all night, without significantly reducing the pileup. The second station was designated for CW and SSB operation. The propagation was excellent. The 10 meter band was open for hours, 15 meters was going well and the upper WARC bands were full of callers. Japan

is on the doorstep and the signals from the “Country of the Rising Sun” were accordingly strong. Thanks to good discipline and good operating techniques the QSO rates were still high, so it was fun to work through the pile ups.

By Wednesday we had already logged the first 10,000 QSOs. In the evenings, Europe was easy to reach on 30 and 40 meters, many DL stations found their way into our log. Yet we continued to be plagued by the frequent loss of power. On Thursday, 14th March, Sigi (DL7DF), Frank (DL7UFR), Leszek (SP3DOI) and Wolf (DL4WK) should have left for Temotu, but as was clarified previously, the flight was delayed until Saturday. So the four members of the “Temotu-group” packed all the equipment designated for Temotu on Friday, 15 March. The weight allowance was only 16kg. We hoped Solomon Airlines would accept some excess baggage. Late in the afternoon, Karl appeared in our shack. He is the pilot of the flight to Temotu. Karl was born in Cologne and flew for 25 years for an airline in Papua New Guinea. He is 73 years old, looks much younger and is still very active. He had heard of our airline scheduling problems and promised to fly the group with all their luggage to Lata on Santa Cruz (Temotu province), if weather permitted.



Our German born pilot, Karl, was our savior. He made sure we got to Temotu with all our gear.

During the night from Friday to Saturday, Manfred (DK1BT) made the first QSO's on 6 meters when a sudden band opening to BA, BY, DU, KH2, KH6 and JA brought 189 contacts into the log.

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... How we brought you H40T and H44G (con'd)

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On Saturday morning at 06:00 the "Temotu group" loaded all the luggage on a van, grabbed few loaves of white bread, and drove to the airport, leaving four operators behind in Honiara. On the flight to Temotu Province, Captain Karl offered us a seat in the cockpit, which, of course, was highly appreciated by all four of us. It gave us the chance for some exceptional photos, in particular the landing on Santa Cruz. There are only two flights per week into Temotu, and therefore the arrival of an aircraft is always a big event. Almost all the inhabitants of the island gather at the airport and say goodbye to family members or guests and welcome the newcomers.



The airport terminal fills with people when a flight arrives or departs.

Lionel, the owner of our motel, awaited us. Lata is a very small place. The motel is only about 500 meters away from the airport. But nobody could be found to carry our 200kg of luggage in this heat until a pickup truck was found and the job was done quickly. Due to the shift of flights, our stay on Santa Cruz was unfortunately shortened to less than a week. Consequently, we had the ambitious goal to put up all antennas on the first day. Severe persistent rains spoiled everything. Tuning the antennas to resonance proved to be extremely difficult. On the first day only our wire antennas were completed.

The beam was finally set on a 10-foot bamboo pole on the second day with the help of the entire staff of our motel. A stainless steel water tank was placed in such a way that it was the base of our Spider-beam. With the help of a second bamboo rod, the bamboo pole with the beam on top of it was finally



Our antenna farm at the "Lata Motel".

erected. Our concern that the bamboo rod would break was, fortunately, unrealized. Now we could finally start the operation. H40T was in the air with four stations simultaneously. The joy did not last long. The 6 meter station interfered with the HF-transceivers. A switching power supply was identified as the source of the noise. We had tested this power supply in Berlin and already used it in Honiara, without any kind of interference. Here on Temotu with only a few local electrical devices, the background noise was obviously so low that we immediately noticed the noise from the power supply.

The premises of the "Lata Motel" are not very large. Therefore all antennas stood very close together. Interference between the stations was unavoidable despite inserted filters. The radiation towards the north was obstructed by a hill. Fortunately, the domestic power supply on Santa Cruz is very stable, provided that prior payment was made for the electricity. On the Solomon Islands, electricity must be paid for in advance! In the night of Sunday to Monday the chief of "Lata Motel" came to our shack and told us that only one unit of electricity was still available. If that one is consumed, the electricity meter would shut down the power for the whole motel. To delay this shut down as long as possible we switched off everything that was not needed. It did not help. The big shut down happened before dawn. How to get power again? It is only possible to buy electricity units in the agency of the electricity supplier in the capital, Honiara. After payment a 20-digit code is provided, which has to be entered via the keypad on the local electricity meter (cash

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. . . How we brought you H40T and H44G (con'd)



The concept of prepaid electrical power was unknown to us, and was nearly our undoing. Fortunately having comrades in Honiara, where the power must be paid for, saved the day.

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prepayment power meter). Fortunately, we still had our H44G group in Honiara, whom we contacted via mobile phone and asked Manfred to immediately buy some electricity units. A short time later the problem was solved.

Early in February, an earthquake of the magnitude 8.0 had occurred about 30 km west of Santa Cruz. As a consequence, a tsunami had destroyed the houses in three villages on the west side of the island. To get an idea of the damage, we did an island trip. There is no bus in Santa Cruz. Lionel got us a pick-up, put four garden chairs in the back, and we had a fairly comfortable ride. We passed the

police station, but they did not show any interest in our unusual mobile. In the palm forest near the runway at the airport we saw the first damage. The salt water had done a terrible job. The palm trees were still standing, but the entire undergrowth was dead. Inhabitants of the islands planted new bushes. The damage in the villages could be divided into three categories. There are a very few houses without any damage. Other houses were damaged by the tsunami. The vast majority of the houses were completely destroyed. The inhabitants of the island live in a very tectonically active zone. Earthquakes are part of their daily life.

We experienced an earthquake on 19 March at about 21:15. The earth shook with a quake of magnitude 4.9. There was a hell of a noise, you think the house will collapse, and then all was quiet again. Very quiet. At 22:25 and 22:41 the next tremors followed. The house shook again. Then quiet again and the islanders turned back into the road, as every night. Even the "Charity World Vision" went out and explored the island for any possible damages. Ten minutes after the last tremors a violent storm started to hit the island. We feared for our antennas. Fortunately, the earthquake and the storm did not cause damage, even the power supply was still working.

One day before the return flight back to Honiara, we decided to take down the R7 and the Spiderbeam

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Tsunami damage was still visible in Temotu Province.

... How we brought you H40T and H44G (con'd)

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about an hour before sunset. Beam and R7 were packed in the in the boxes that evening. The wire antennas were still used during the night. Around 05:00 in the morning of Saturday, 23 March, the last antennas were disassembled in total darkness and also packed for dispatch. So we were at the airport at around 08:00. We were the first to arrive. At around 09:30 the square in front of the terminal was slowly filling with people. Shortly before 10:00 clock we saw the Dash-8 arriving. As expected, Captain Karl was again the pilot. After a short time of loading and boarding we flew back to Honiara.

In Honiara, on Sunday we started with disassembling the beam and the 160/80 meter antennas, two stations remained in operation during the last night. There were still very active pile-ups calling H44G as we shut down the stations. The last log entry was done on Monday morning at 20:58 UTC on 30 meters with IWØHEX Pasquale, from Rome. We made a total of 45,123 QSOs, of which 33,613 were in CW, 4,251 in SSB and 7,259 in RTTY. On 160 meters we made 249 QSOs and on 80 meters 1,710 QSOs. Our two entity DXpedition finally was QRT.

On Monday, 25 March, we started our journey back home. The flight was delayed by two hours. There were no problems with checking in. We were very pleased to leave the island without any complications. After a flight of almost four hours we landed in Brisbane and had to claim all our luggage. It was not possible to check it through to Berlin, because we

had a longer lay-over than eight hours. So we ordered a big taxi, which brought us with all our luggage to the nearby "IBIS hotel" where we were already expected by Catherine (VK4GH) and John (VK4IO). We had interesting conversations, a bite to eat, and then went to bed early. Next day, at noon time we boarded the aircraft, which took us back to Europe via Singapore, Abu Dhabi and Milan, from where we took the final flight into Berlin. We were back home.

We wish to thank the many manufacturers, foundations, clubs and individuals who provided equipment, funds, or services-in-kind to make our DXpedition a success. A full listing of our "helpers" can be found on our DXpedition web page at:

<http://www.dl7df.com/h4/>

Until our next adventure, 73—

Reiner DL7KL

Frank DL7UFR

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